



Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

February 22, 2005

The Honorable Jim Nussle
Chairman
U.S. House Budget Committee
Room 309 Cannon HOB
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John Spratt
Ranking Member
U.S. House Budget Committee
Room B-71 Cannon HOB
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Nussle and Ranking Member Spratt:

We are writing to urge you to support working families and their children by increasing funding for child care, preschool, and afterschool programs in FY06. By freezing funds for these programs, the President's budget does considerable harm to millions of hard working American families.

Child care, preschool, and afterschool programs are essential not only because they enable parents to work, but because of their impact on the physical, cognitive and social development of the child. Research shows that quality care, which is stimulating and responsive, enhances the development of children. Afterschool programs also provide the significant benefits of cutting down on crime; reducing pregnancy, smoking, and drug use among teens; and helping to keep children and communities safe.

Unfortunately, President Bush's budget will once again freeze funding for programs like these that benefit working families and their children. For example, the President's FY06 request for mandatory funding of the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) is the same as it has been in previous years--\$2.717 billion. If CCDBG is funded at this amount, approximately 300,000 children of working parents will lose childcare. Mandatory childcare in CCDBG must be funded at \$7 billion to ensure that families will get the childcare assistance they need.

Additionally, we believe the President's FY06 budget request of \$6.888 billion for Head Start programs is inadequate. This amount covers less than the cost of inflation and will cut 25,000 children from Head Start programs. Moreover, the President's request of \$45 million for a demonstration project which would allow several states to control their own Head Start programs is a diversion of critical funds. Head Start funding should go directly to the communities where it is needed the most. Block granting to states and mixing Head Start funds with other program funds will not work to assure that the

programs will be subject to the same quality and standards as required by current federal law.

Furthermore, President Bush only offers \$991 million for the 21st Century Community Learning Centers. This amount is well below the \$2.25 billion that was authorized for FY06 in the No Child Left Behind Act. As a result, 1.75 million children will be without the afterschool programs that both Congress and the President agreed to in No Child Left Behind. We request that you fully fund the 21st Century Community Learning Centers at its authorized level.

Frozen funding is disastrous for families who struggle daily with the dilemma of where to find affordable, quality care for their children to thrive. If we truly want our children to get a good start and grow smart, we must increase funding for child care, preschool, and afterschool programs.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.


Sincerely,

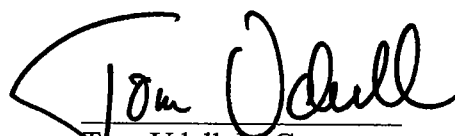

Lynn Woolsey, M.C.

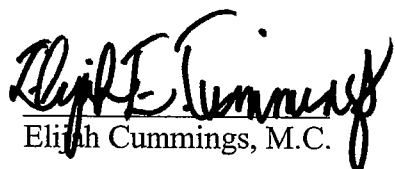

Dale Kildee, M.C.


Barbara Lee, M.C.

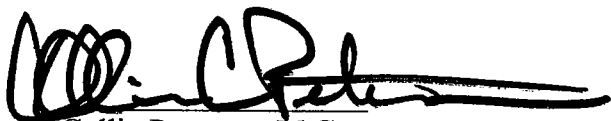

Dennis Moore, M.C.



Adam Schiff, M.C.


Tom Udall, M.C.


Elijah Cummings, M.C.

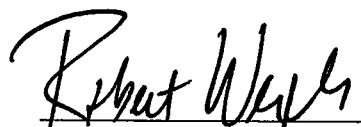

Rush Holt, M.C.

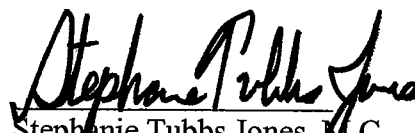

Collin Peterson, M.C.

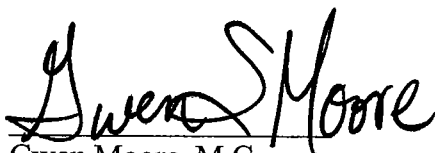

Nydia Velasquez, M.C.

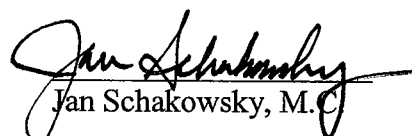

Raul Grijalva, M.C.

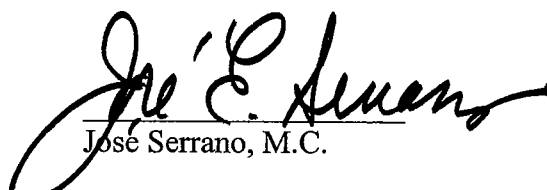

Patrick Kennedy, M.C.

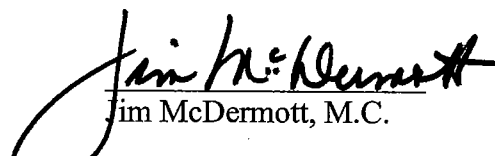

Robert Wexler, M.C.

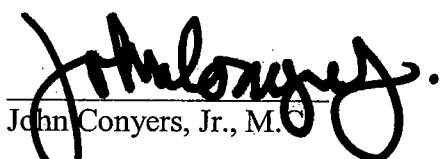

Stephanie Tubbs Jones, M.C.

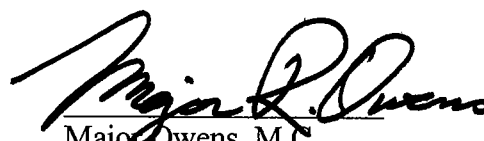

Gwen Moore, M.C.

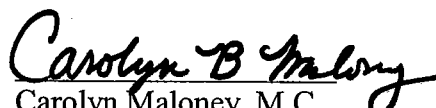

Jan Schakowsky, M.C.



Jose Serrano, M.C.

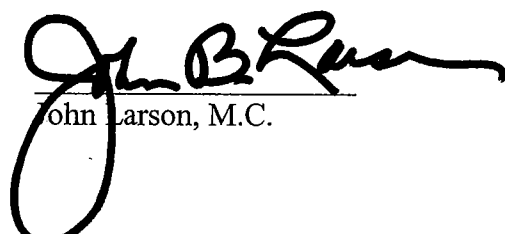

Jim McDermott, M.C.

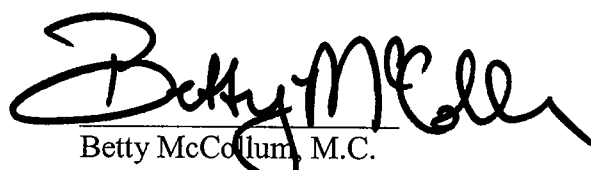

John Conyers, Jr., M.C.


Major Owens, M.C.


Carolyn Maloney, M.C.


Maurice Hinchey, M.C.


John Larson, M.C.


Betty McCollum, M.C.

A large, stylized handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Charles B. Rangel". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right. Below the signature, the text "Charles Rangel, M.C." is printed in a smaller, sans-serif font.

Charles Rangel, M.C.